

SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR SIMULTANEOUSLY DISPLAYING VIDEO PROGRAMMING AND INSTANT MESSAGING

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

[0064] Instant messaging (IM) and TV programming are displayed simultaneously on a TV screen. An instant messaging window on the screen displays posted messages and identifies the TV program (if any) being currently viewed by each user posting messages. An icon accompanying a message can be selected by a message recipient to permit a telephone call to be automatically dialed and completed to the message sender. Video files attached to sent messages include a key which may be compared to a key at the destination, so that the video file may be viewed by the recipient only if there is a match. Data collected at a server managing the instant messaging may be used to monitor message, television and telephone activity, as well as demographic data associated with the IM users.

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